

Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 18, 2012
6:30-8:30pm EST
Comfort Inn, Newberry, MI

Chair: Dick Pershinske Vice-Chair: Glenn Moll Secretary: Ginny Giddings

Council Members Present

Tom Buckingham	Gary Gorniak
Bob DeVillez	Tim Hass
Jim Duke	Jim Hoy
Gary Ellenwood	Michael Lawless
Jason Garvon	Glenn Moll
Ginny Giddings	Dick Pershinske

Council Members Excused/Absent

Bill Becks	Mike Patrick
Dale DuFour	Ed Radecki
Ron Ford	Chad Radka
Mike Meier	

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Liaisons

Kristi Dahlstrom, Executive Assistant, Marquette
Steve DeBrabander, Grants Management, Lansing
Lt. Skip Hagy, Law Enforcement, Newberry
Craig Krepps, Parks & Recreation Division, Newberry
Keith Magnusson, Forest Resources Division, Newberry
Steve Scott, Fisheries Division, Newberry
Kristie Sitar, Wildlife Division, Newberry
Jon Spieles, Marketing & Outreach, Newberry
Stacy Welling Haughey, Upper Peninsula Regional Coordinator, Marquette

Special Guests

Lake Superior State University Resource Management Students

Call To Order

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (EUPCAC) meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm EST by **Chair Pershinske**. Welcomed to the meeting were the Lake Superior State University (LSSU) Students, Senator Tom Casperson, Congressman Benishek's Representative Dan Blough, and Governor Snyder's U.P. Representative Dave Nyberg. Comments from all were encouraged.

Adoption of Agenda

Chair Pershinske asked if there were any additions to the agenda; none were brought forth. **Mr. Moll** motioned to adopt the agenda as presented; **Mr. Lawless** seconded the motion. **Ayes: All.**

Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Becks, Mr. DuFour, Mr. Ford, Mr. Meier, Mr. Patrick, Mr. Radecki and Mr. Radka. Motion carried.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Chair Pershinske asked the Council if there were any corrections to the minutes as presented; none were raised. **Mr. Duke motioned to approve the August 16, 2012 EUPCAC Meeting minutes as submitted; Ms. Giddings seconded the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Becks, Mr. DuFour, Mr. Ford, Mr. Meier, Mr. Patrick, Mr. Radecki and Mr. Radka. Motion carried.**

Chair Comments

Chair Pershinske provided a brief update on the wolf legislation; he stated that a tentative hearing has been scheduled after the election in mid-November. He also noted the private forest management issue seems to have stabilized; Director Creagh has advised the Michigan Department of Agriculture is going to handle the program, conservation districts are involved, foresters are being hired and the actual fundamental working process has been put in place. **Mr. Lawless** noted the foresters hired so far are not a result of the legislation; the legislation will add to the program.

Public Comment

There were no public comments brought forward.

Reports

1. Stacy Welling Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator:

- **Mrs. Welling Haughey** provided a brief history of the Councils for the audience, including how Council members are chosen.
- The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) meeting was held in Ontonagon last week. It was a good meeting with several public comments.
- There is an update on the Nuisance Animal Control permit issue in the meeting packets.
- As mentioned earlier in the year, the DNR has been working to resolve encroachment cases and has developed the Encroachment Resolution Initiative to work with landowners. Property owners have until 12/31/12 to apply to have their case resolved.
- Regional state forest management plans are out for public review. Please take a look at them. A handout in the meeting packet includes the link to the plans online.
- A wolf update from Chief Mason is included in the Division Reports under the NRC report.
- A reminder that applications for open positions on the Citizen Advisory Councils are due on November 1.
- At the NRC meeting in November, the Commission will be reviewing a land transaction, the Crisp Point Project, which has been deemed by the US Forest Service as the third best project in the country. A federal grant and a private donor are providing the funding to purchase the tract. It will open 3,000 acres to the public, provide timber management, and also secure Trail 8. **Mrs. Welling Haughey** indicated she met with Luce County officials to update them on the project and will be meeting with Chippewa County officials next week. Mr. Cameron from the audience asked if Pittman-Robertson (PR) funding was involved in the purchase of this tract and if the current roads on that property will be closed. **Mrs. Welling Haughey** indicated no PR or state funding will be used and she was told that all

roads will be maintained and some may even be updated. Active harvests may temporarily close roads, however, they will continue to be maintained.

- The Council made introductions and indicated the groups they represent to the LSSU students.

2. DNR Division Reports: Written staff reports were provided to Council members on October 10, 2012. The following are current updates to those reports.

- Keith Magnusson, Forest Resources: **Mr. Magnusson** noted he was attending for Mr. Jeff Stampfly, who's involved in forest audits this week. He had no further updates to the report.
- Kristie Sitar, Wildlife Division: **Ms. Sitar**, attending on behalf of Mr. Terry Minzey, stated she did not have any updates to report.
- Steve Scott, Fisheries Division: **Mr. Scott** added that he recently attended a cormorant meeting and provided an update. Monies are received from Congress for cormorant control, which is unique to Michigan. Counties with management activities are down 40-90% depending on the area. They are making good progress in controlling cormorants in Michigan. He stated the state legislature authorized \$100,000 from the general fund to further cormorant management, in addition to current federal funding.
 - **Mr. Hoy** asked about a tag for the new proposed musky regulations; **Mr. Scott** stated that the tag is free and it can be obtained when purchasing a license.
- Craig Krepps, Parks & Recreation: **Mr. Krepps** stated that he was attending for Mr. Rich Hill and noted one change; Tahquamenon State Park had an increase in attendance of 43,000 visitors in lieu of 37,000 visitors as stated in the report.
- Jon Spieles, Marketing & Outreach: **Mr. Spieles** added that 680 school children came to the Little Manistee Weir last week to learn how to take eggs. It was a great experience for the kids. The same program will be held next week at the Platte River Weir. **Mr. Ellenwood** asked if a program will be offered for educators as well; **Mr. Spieles** stated that one was offered at MSU's Kettunen Center primarily for public school educators with about 150 in attendance.
- Lt. Skip Hagy, Law Enforcement: **Lt. Hagy** stated that it has been a busy fall. The youth hunt went good and is taking off well by getting kids involved. There has still been plenty of violations and a few deer cases recently. On a positive note, CO Mike Hammill of Newberry just received Conservation Officer of the Year. He does a fantastic job.

3. Lake Superior State University Student Engagement: **Mr. Spieles** noted that he prepared a document for the LSSU students that outline DNR activities students can become involved in. It is very important for students to be engaged if natural resource management is the field they wish to work in. The greatest challenge is encouraging families to get outdoors; students can help the DNR do that. **Mr. Spieles** indicated he can be contacted at any time for any questions related to activities or fields of study.

Mrs. Welling Haughey opened the floor to the students to ask questions for the Council, DNR staff, or the legislators. Numerous questions were asked and pertained to cougar surveys, council resolutions and meetings, fields of study, bear surveys, Mackinac Island, best methods of outreach and education, how politicians work with field staff, reducing zebra mussels, and the current Asian carp situation. The students were thanked again for attending and for asking great questions.

Old Business

1. *Agenda Survey Topic #2/Forest Management Activities:* **Chair Pershinske** stated discussion on this topic will be deferred to December. Mr. David Price of the Forest Resources Division in Lansing will come to the December meeting to provide a presentation on the regional state forest management plans, which were recently released for public review and input. There will still be time to provide input on the plans after the presentation. **Mr. Ellenwood** asked if the plans address biodiversity; **Mrs. Welling Haughey** stated the biodiversity project has been put on hold. **Mr. Hoy** informed the group there was an active bill in the Senate that pertains to biodiversity; **Senator Casperson** stated he is running legislation to remove a couple of items relating to land set aside in the DNR's biodiversity report. He stated he held a hearing in Gaylord and there was overwhelming support for his legislation.
2. *Introduction of Agenda Survey Topic #3/Deer Management:* **Chair Pershinske** asked if there was an update from the U.P. Deer Advisory Team (UPDAT). **Mr. Buckingham**, Council representative on the UPDAT, stated there hasn't been any new information since the June meeting. **Ms. Sitar** indicated the next meeting will be scheduled in December or January.

New Business

1. *Council Membership:* **Chair Pershinske** noted that several members' terms are expiring in January. **Mrs. Dahlstrom** explained the renewal process. **Chair Pershinske** stated he will be following up with a member who has missed several meetings. **Mrs. Welling Haughey** noted that Council Member Mike Meier will not be renewing his term.
2. *North Country Trail Presentation:* **Mr. Hass** thanked the Council for the opportunity to provide information on the North Country Trail (NCT). He introduced Ms. Lorana Jinkerson who is a board member for the NCT. He provided a brief overview of the trail system, which is non-motorized. He indicated many volunteers are needed to clear trails and would like to get the younger generation involved. He described the work he's done on the NCT in the Duck Lake Fire/Two Hearted River areas. **Ms. Jinkerson** offered a detailed description of the NCT with a presentation.
 - *NCT Trail Background:* NCT was authorized by Congress in 1980.
 - *Map of 11 Scenic Trails:* Other national scenic trails include the Appalachian Trail (only 2,300 miles), Continental Divide, Florida, Pacific Coast, etc.
 - *4600 Miles & Counting:* There are 4,600+ miles of NCT trail throughout the U.S. crossing into/over more than 160 public lands (i.e. national forest areas, state park and historic areas, state game areas, etc.).
 - *State Logo:* The NCT is working to join up with the Appalachian Trail, which takes approval from Congress. The NCT passes through 7 states from New York to North Dakota.
 - *Michigan's NCT, Properties, and Trail Map in the U.P.:* The NCT in Michigan covers 1,150 miles, almost a quarter of the entire trail and is 66% complete. The trail in the U.P. passes through private and forest lands.
 - *Uses of the NCT:* The NCT is a premier foot path stretching across the northern tier of the US. There are places that trails are shared with other organizations, which allow bikes or horses.
 - *Partners:* The Federal Park Service is the official administrator of the trail. The US Forest Service is a second partner. The third partner is the non-profit NCT Association. There are many more, including state DNR's, etc.

- *NCT Chapters in the U.P.:* There are 5 NCT chapters in the U.P. Mr. Hass is president of the Superior Shoreline Chapter based in Alger County.
- *Building and Maintaining the NCT/Volunteers:* In 2011, 928 volunteers put in close to 70,000 hours to help build and maintain the trail. They include members, AmeriCorps, Boy & Girl Scouts, students, community members, etc. Younger volunteers are needed!
- *Following the NCT:* Trail markers include dollar bill-sized “blue blazes”, “turn” signs, Carsonite posts, trail signs, urban signs and road signs.

Chair Pershinske thanked Mr. Hass and Ms. Jinkerson for their informative presentation. **Mr. Hass** encouraged anyone who is interested to contact him or Ms. Jinkerson if they wish to volunteer or would like more information.

3. *Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Presentation (MNRTF):* **Mrs. Welling Haughey** introduced Mr. Steve DeBrabander of the DNR Grants Management Section. **Mr. DeBrabander** noted that members of the public own thousands of acres in the U.P. The DNR manages it for the public. He stated to the LSSU students that he started out as a student assistant and explained the options available working for the DNR. He then provided a thorough description of the MNRTF. The following areas were covered:
 - *Origins of the MNRTF:* The fund was originally used to buy land for public recreation.
 - *1984 MNRTF Constitutional Amendment:* Approved by voters in a 2-1 margin in 1984, permanently protecting the fund, and provides funding for acquisition of land and development of outdoor recreation facilities. In May 2011, the \$500 million cap was reached. Incoming funds now go to the Park Endowment Fund. No new money is coming into the fund. Funding for future grants will come from interest/investment earnings.
 - *MNRTF Board:* There are 5 members on the Board who meet 6 times per year to recommend projects for funding to the Legislature/Governor from each year’s set of applications. Staff visit the application areas and score them prior to the Board’s review.
 - *Application Timeline/Annual Cycle:* March 1 is the recreation plan deadline, April 2 is the application deadline and in December, the Board makes recommendations for funding to the legislature.
 - *Eligibility for Grants:* Those eligible to apply must be a local unit of government, the state, (designated) school district, or recreation authority legally authorized to provide recreation and have an approved 5-year recreation plan on file with the DNR.
 - *Acquisition Grant Basics:* There are no minimum or maximum dollar amounts, a minimum 25% local match, must be a willing seller, DNR approved fair market value, two years to complete, reimbursement program and escrow closing option available.
 - *Grant Basics for Development Projects:* There is a \$15,000 minimum grant request, a \$300,000 maximum grant request, a minimum 25% match, two years to complete, and must meet ADA requirements.
 - *Development Grant Basics:* A park must be available to the public, kept in public outdoor recreation in perpetuity, needs to be well maintained, and MNRTF program acknowledgement signage is required.
 - *Scoring Criteria:* Criteria includes the need for the project, site and project quality, applicant history, natural resource protection and use, natural resource-based recreation opportunities, financial need, urban area recreation opportunities, match, entrance fees, and universal design. Criteria that gain extra points were explained. The focus on urban area programs has been important and gains extra points. There were 142 applications received in 2012.

- *MNRTF Board Priority Projects:* There are three project priorities: 1) trails and greenways, which include any kind of trail, 2) urban areas, and 3) wildlife/ecological corridors and winter deeryard acquisitions.
 - *Past Awards/Current Applications in the U.P.:* A map of the U.P. indicating the number of past approved grants and 2012 applications received from each county was shown. There has been \$134 million in grants given to the U.P. in both state and local projects.
 - *Trail Acquisitions in the U.P.:* Trails are the number one priority for the MNRTF Board. A map indicating existing state trails funded by the trust fund and potential future trust fund acquisitions was shown.
 - *UP Projects Listing:* A listing of 2010 and 2011 U.P. projects funded was provided indicating county, project, and grant award. A listing of 2012 U.P. applications was also included.
- Chair Pershinske** stated that the trust fund is capped at \$500 million; the revenue coming in now goes to the state park endowment fund to improve state parks. It compliments the recreation passport funding, which part goes to the Parks Division and part goes to grants.
- Mr. Hass** asked if the North Country Trail would be eligible for MNRTF funding; **Mr. DeBrabander** indicated non-profits are not eligible.

Mr. DeBrabander invited the Council to contact him if there are any questions regarding MNRTF projects or the application process. **Chair Pershinske** thanked Mr. DeBrabander for his excellent presentation.

4. *Sandhill Crane Discussion:* **Chair Pershinske** stated that this topic was discussed at the 2011 October meeting which resulted in a resolution sent to Director Stokes in support of establishing the sandhill crane as a game species and establishing an open season. The request was denied as it was not considered to be a legislative priority at that time. **Mr. Hoy** stated he spent an afternoon watching the migration, which hasn't reduced in size, and he still supports a hunting season. **Mrs. Welling Haughey** stated that she discussed this issue with DNR staff and it was suggested to involve the Department of Agriculture; she indicated she would be happy to work with them on behalf of the Council. **Mr. Lawless** indicated that after the resolution passed last year, he spoke with Chief Mason and he suggested the same course of action; he agreed with the Council that there is a significant population in the U.P. **Chair Pershinske** stated the Farm Bureau also has a policy on it. **Mrs. Welling Haughey** stated since the resolution passed, there is now a permit system available for reducing the population. **Mr. Lawless** motioned to have **Mrs. Welling Haughey** work with the Department of Agriculture to support legislation to establish the sandhill crane as a game species and open an initial hunting season; **Mr. Buckingham** seconded the motion. **Mr. Garvon** asked if Wisconsin had a season; **Mr. Lawless** indicated the western corridor has a season, but this is a different population. **Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Becks, Mr. DuFour, Mr. Ford, Mr. Meier, Mr. Patrick, Mr. Radecki and Mr. Radka. Motion carried.**

Next Meeting

Chair Pershinske noted the next regular meeting of the EUPCAC will be held on Thursday, December 6th at the Comfort Inn in Newberry.

Public Comment

- An LSSU student asked if a Sandhill Crane season was proposed, would it include all of Michigan or just the Upper Peninsula. **Chair Pershinske** stated it would depend on many factors.

- **Mr. Stephen King** from the audience asked about core samples being taken at local test sites and what they are for. **Mr. Magnusson** indicated mapping of limestone formations are being done.
- **Senator Casperson** provided an update on two issues he is currently working on:
 - Wolf Issue: The wolf season legislation was brought up and received testimony in committee Wednesday morning and it is going to the Senate on November 8th. Representative Huuki will be bringing it up in the House. They will move on it together.
 - ORV Trails: He attended a U.P. ORV ride recently that included conservation officers, state police, the regional director from MDOT, and a local club in an effort to find ways to coordinate with MDOT on additional trails. The goal is to get ORV users off the roads as much as possible. An obstacle includes two federal forests, but they are hoping to work together to make it work.
- Mr. Kip Cameron asked about the land acquisition for the Two Hearted River for \$2 million listed on the 2012 Trust Fund applications in the earlier presentation. **Mr. DeBrabander** indicated the DNR has applied to the Trust Fund to acquire that tract. He's not aware of all the details but does believe it has frontage on the Two Hearted River. **Mr. Magnusson** added the tract is on the main branch of the river. **Mr. DeBrabander** stated he would be happy to call Mr. Cameron with more information about the location.

Closing Comments from the Council

- **Mr. Hoy** asked if the state would maintain the land for the Crisp Point Project. **Mrs. Welling Haughey** stated that she will have Ms. Kerry Wieber, who is working on the project contact him regarding the specifics. He also asked if the Council needed to do anything further on the nuisance animal control permit handout in the packets; **Chair Pershinske** stated that stakeholders are asked to provide comment. If the Council is interested in a resolution, it can be done via email as well.
- **Chair Pershinske** commended the LSSU students for taking the time to come and participate with the Council. He appreciated their involvement. The Council's role is to bridge the gap between the citizens and the DNR and he thinks the Council is doing a commendable job. Members spend a lot of time working on the issues.

Adjourn

There being no further business, **Chair Pershinske** adjourned the meeting at 8:40pm EST.